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SUBJECT: NO AMERICAN CASUALTIES IN BUS ACCIDENT

¶1. SUMMARY: Sixty-six people died in a traffic accident over the weekend in Burkina Faso. According to Burkinab authorities there are no American victims from the accident. END SUMMARY.

¶2. On November 15, 2008, 66 people died when a truck and a passenger bus collided and caught fire near the town of Boromo, 167 kilometers west of Ouagadougou. The cause of the tragedy is still unclear. Out of the 66 people that died in the accident, the remains of 55 individuals were unidentifiable due to severe burns. All the victims were buried on site. However, the Gendarmerie in Boromo is still working on the identification of victims and notification of families. Post will remain engaged and follow the results of the investigations.

¶3. The 31 survivors of the accident have been admitted to medical centers in Boromo, Ouagadougou, and Bobo-Dioulasso. Five of the survivors are said to be in critical condition.

¶4. While there is no official manifest that lists the names of the passengers, post was informed by hospital and police officials that there were no expatriate passengers on the bus. Newspaper reports suggest that most of the passengers were Burkinab and Ivorian.

¶5. While authorities continue to investigate the cause of the accident, eye witness accounts reported in local newspapers suggest that the truck driver may have fallen asleep behind the wheel. Newspapers also quote the bus driver, who survived the accident, as saying that there were a total of 92 passengers on the bus. However, journalists noted that the bus had 75 seats.

¶6. Post has sent letters of condolence to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Transportation.

JACKSON